

"Dear Mr. President", Minneapolis, Minnesota, January or February 1942

AFS 6427A

Cut A1

Leland B. Saturn: Dear Mr. President, my name is Leland B. Saturn and my address, 2019 South Seventh Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. By reason of my personal and religious conviction I am a conscientious objector to any and all forms of war and to all preparations pertaining thereto. This conviction doesn't stem from a starry-eyed idealism, not from the assumption that man is inherently good, not from the so-called over-simplification of the problem of evil, not from motives of appeasement, not from a will to national isolationism, not from thinking which refuses to face facts of evil which are inimical to the best in our American way of life. My conviction is rooted in the knowledge that there is a very practical higher way of living and dealing with men, individually and collectively. It works ultimately whether the other side is willing to adopt the same approach or not. It begins at the revelation of the character of God found in Christ. For me the life and teachings of Jesus supply my only standard for faith and actions and it is my conviction that his way cannot be reconciled with the way of war whether offensive or defensive. One is a negation of the other. I believe that war is the greatest crime which can be committed against humanity. A method of dealing with the problem of international evil in which nothing is gained and all is lost. War settles only the question of military might. The wrongs which it purports to alleviate remain and have grown a thousand fold when the war is over. As a conscientious objector I believe the greatest service I can offer my country is not a that of a circumstance-motivated life but a Christ-motivated life. The greatest disservice I can offer my country is the repudiation of this higher way. I know that Christ's way of redeeming love, though practiced ever so falteringly, individually or collectively, is all for good and gain. I am led by him on this way. I cannot walk otherwise.

Cut A2

Librarian: I am a librarian in a large university library, engaged to a man who is in the Engineer Division in the Top-graphics Section. He was drafted last May and right at the present time I don't know for sure whether he is in Fort Meade or whether he is on his way to some southern camp. He was drafted and I think takes it better than a lot of men who were drafted, but of course I am prejudiced [*laughs*] and, although he doesn't want to go, doesn't like to go, he hasn't been too complaining about it. If anybody's done any complaining I suppose I've done the most. He is going to some southern camp and will probably go overseas. I hope not. It seems to me that they could send some of the men who have enlisted rather than those who were drafted, and in a way forced to go. Although I suppose if they sent the ones who, if they only sent those who enlisted there wouldn't

be as many enlistments. I have known few who have wanted to go and who have wanted to go overseas, but not very many. The majority that I've heard from are going because they have to go. And they don't like it. And they're not crying about it, they see that it has to be done and they're going, but it's a shame.

Cut A3

Bruce Butchard: Mr. President, my name is Bruce Brutchard and I am a student of electrical engineering at the University of Minnesota. I'm one of those who felt strong non-interventionist sentiments in the days when the conflict was confined to the continent of Europe and was not, it seems to me, an ignorance of the interdependence of nations nor our reliance upon supplies reaching us from the Far East that I felt these sentiments, it was rather that I felt that with the sacrifice that would have to be met anyhow if conflict were entered into by our nation that with this sacrifice, it would be possible for our nation to become somewhat self-sufficient. The reason I felt that our nation could be self-sufficient is that I have an unalterable faith in the ingenuity of our unhampered and free-thinking American scientists to devise means that would suffice at least for the period in which our nation should have to, shall we say, isolate itself from the world conflict. I felt that the ingenuity would suffice during that period to devise means whereby we could become self-sufficient at least for the period of sacrifice, for the period of world conflict, and that the small sacrifices that would be made during this period would be much smaller than those sacrifices which would undoubtedly come about as a result of our entering the European conflict.

Cut A4

Philip Galvine: Dear Mr. President this is Philip Galvine I'm a junior at the University of Minnesota, about twenty-one years old. Got a 4-F rating in the draft, but about a year or so or more I was quite an ardent interventionist. Now I perhaps slipped a little. Well, what I want to know is steps that have been taken to win the war, what steps are going to be take to win the peace? What is there that's going to guarantee us that the boys that do come back, if they do come back, will not come back as charitable hospital patients in veterans hospitals or else come back as gangsters like they did after last war because they aren't afraid to kill, a new gangster era. Who is sacrificing this war? Is there a terrific sacrifice in a government defense bond which pays thirty-three and third percent in ten years? To me it seems to me it seems like a pretty good investment. In other words, those that can't afford to buy are really making a pretty good profit on this war. And has profiteering been taken out of the war as it was supposed to have been? Congressman Moss, I think it was Moss, here in the state of Minnesota in speaking to the navy, said that he would guarantee peace and a new live for two hundred years if we had an all out effort to win this war. How is he going to guarantee this?

What steps are going to be taken? In other words, the ones that are doing the sacrificing, how are they going to be repaid?

Cut A5

Lottie Ryman: Do you need my address first? All right. [*said to interviewer*]

My name is Lottie Ryman, 1806 Eighteenth Street, South, ???. And I really, with all my heart, you know, I've been thinking things over about the war, and how things is going to be. My real desire is, you know, that this country really win the war and defeat the enemy, and try to do all we can in power to escape this here great, hard times that has come upon us now. And I really, looking for our country to win, and we all are in hopes that it will win. How I think.

Cut A6

Reed Erickson: My name is Reed Erickson and I live in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota. My youth and boyhood was spent in the state of Utah in a small community, and I feel that this is an opportunity to say something about the present emergency. My great grandparents came to this country seeking religious freedom and they found it here and I feel that this is an opportunity for me at the present time in this emergency, this national crisis, to show my thankfulness and my gratefulness for the privileges and opportunities that this United States of ours has given me. A chance to live in freedom, happiness, and contentment, and it has given me an opportunity to live in a way of life that's proven to me to be a greater than any other way of life than any other man could possibly ask for. So I think that now in this crisis is time for us all to come to the aid of this great United States of ours and that no sacrifice is too great to make.

Cut A7

Ted Austen: Dear Mr. President, my name is Ted Austen, 2012 Two-and-a-half Street, South. Yes, I have two sons in the army age. I am very interested in this war, hoping it would be over before my sons would need to be called. But this war we must win regardless of what our sacrifice may be.